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ABSTRACT

The summer television project was instituted to provide a period of exploration and experimentation during which the needs of the Wisconsin State Employment Service and the Work Incentive Program were examined. Television was primarily useful for self-evaluation and for demonstration or introduction of new programs. Several types of television equipment were available. A one half inch system cost from $800 to $2,000, whereas a 1-inch system varied in price from $2,000 to $10,000. The one half inch system was light enough to be moved by one person and transported in an automobile. The larger system weighed at least 200 pounds and required a panel truck for transport. The major advantage of the larger system was its superior picture producing capability. The project must still solve the problems of: (1) which areas can effectively use television, (2) necessary levels of equipment, and (3) administration and control of television activity. (BC)

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REPORT ON
SUMMER EXPERIMENTAL TELEVISION PROJECT
WISCONSIN STATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE
WORK INCENTIVE PROGRAM
JULY 1 TO AUGUST 31, 1969

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REPORT ON
SUMMER EXPERIMENTAL TELEVISION PROJECT
WISCONSIN STATE EMPLOYMENT SERVICE
WORK INCENTIVE PROGRAM
JULY 1 TO AUGUST 31, 1969

The Summer Television Project was created in order to provide a period of exploration and experimentation during which the needs of the Wisconsin State Employment Service and the Work Incentive Program could be ascertained, and after which specific recommendations could be made regarding staffing and equipment. Although there were periods during the course of the project when satisfactory levels of performance in terms of day to day needs were not maintained, ample experience was acquired to provide a sound approach to the development of television. This report is presented in light of this experience, and hopefully will prove useful for future decision making.

The first problem to be considered is that of usage. What conditions or problems exist in specific areas that can be served or alleviated through proper use of television equipment. From experience acquired through the project one of the primary uses for television in WSES-WIN is in the area of self-evaluation. Any circumstance requiring that an individual examine his own behavior or appearance can be benefited by the unique property of television - provision for easy recording and immediate playback. No other method of recording both visually and aurally will provide immediate feedback of information. Since the very essence of the WIN program is one of self improvement, any system which provides a high level of self-evaluation is most desirable and useful.

A second general use of television is for purposes of demonstration. Any circumstance which requires frequent or repeated explanations or demonstrative operations can be benefited. We may use, as an example, the introduction of a new WSES program or procedure which involves a variety of forms and/or equipment.

Normally, introduction of such a program might dictate that several individuals travel to each WSES office to explain the program in detail. With television, this task need be undertaken just once. The resultant recording could then be played back to any group, in any location, at any time. An ancillary benefit of television in this use is the ability to magnify, or provide more detailed views than the average listener is likely to obtain under usual lecture situations.

The foregoing uses are those which would be of most immediate benefit to WSES-WIN. Other uses exist, but they can be explored after a television program is in operation, and primary needs satisfied. It is important to remember that television is essentially a communications system, and can therefore be of benefit when a communications problem exists. The two primary uses described above fall well within the range of this concept. In one case we improve an individual's communication with himself; in the other, we improve one group's communication with many other groups.

Recognizing that television's great advantage is that of improving communications, and applying that advantage to particular problems answers only one of the questions that television may generate. Another difficulty is deciding upon the type of equipment which should be purchased for particular uses.

Basically, there are just two types of instructional television equipment available, those using one-half inch recording tape, and those using one inch tape. The two types of systems differ in cost, portability, and quality of recording. A one-half inch system will range in price from $800 to $2000, while a one inch system may vary between $2000 and $10,000. One-half inch systems can be moved with relative ease by one person, and can be transported in an automobile. Weights of individual components in a one inch system may range to 200 pounds, and require at least a panel truck for transport. The advantage of one inch equipment lies in its superior picture producing capability.

Because of these differences, an agency considering the two alternatives must make a decision based on its own particular circumstances. Where a high degree of portability is required, one-half inch equipment should be purchased. If relatively high quality is important, one inch equipment will serve the greatest need. In a large organization, both needs may be important, and therefore a combination of equipment may be purchased.

This third alternative would appear to best serve the needs of WSES and WIN. For purposes of self-evaluation, and to make recorded materials available to the greatest number of local offices, one-half inch equipment would be suitable. To provide higher quality demonstration and general information recordings, centrally located and non-portable one inch equipment is necessary. Programs recorded on centrally located equipment can be re-recorded on portable equipment for state wide distribution. If both types cannot be acquired in an initial purchase, agency administrators must make a decision as to which type would best serve initial requirements.

Besides the selection of equipment, there exists the additional administrative problem of deciding who, or what division is responsible for equipment. Although the greatest part of the summer project was conducted at the Milwaukee WIN office, I cannot see justification for equipment in that office alone. Television would have to be shared with the adult office, and with the Youth Opportunity Center. With such a sharing arrangement, confusion and consternation as to the location and use of equipment at any given time would be sure to arise. Ideally, some one external to each of these offices should be responsible - someone who possesses a degree of familiarity with television equipment, and who is able to translate the needs of various divisions into tangible television materials. A most effective step would be development of a WSES position, which would

carry responsibility for television planning and development, as well as equipment operation. An initial purchase of equipment would then permit further exploration along the lines begun this summer, but on a state-wide basis. To avoid duplication and conflict, there must be some central administration of television activity.

In summation, three distinct problems face WSES in the development of television as an effective communication tool. These problems are:

1. Determination of specific areas where television can be effectively utilized.
2. Determination of levels of equipment to serve those needs.
3. Administration and control of television activity.

In order to insure effective solutions to these problems, I recommend that WSES take the following steps:

1. Development of a position within an existing division which would carry responsibility for development and use of television throughout the state. This should be a professional level position since it would involve not only a great deal of creative activity, but also liaison between relatively high ranking department officials. The individual hired to fill this position would benefit from some television experience, but definitely should possess the basic technical ability to operate television equipment. Since location of such an individual outside WSES could be difficult, a present staff member could be selected who possesses the proper interest and general technical ability. With some training such a person could be given the responsibility of development. Members of the Manpower Research and Information Division have already had a good deal of exposure to television technology. Some initial phases of television activity would involve a good deal of experimentation. The Manpower Research division might be logical area for initial development.

2. Initial purchase of equipment should involve both one-half and one inch equipmant. If this is not possible, I suggest initial purchase of one-half inch equipment, since early uses will be most likely in the area of self-evaluation. One inch equipment can be added as more sophisticated techniques are developed.

3. Development of specific activities and programs within divisions. If, for example, a program for self-evaluation is developed for WIN, it should become an integral part of the WIN orientation program available to all enrollees. Initial activities should be few in number, and relatively simple in nature. Further development can be carried out as the initial programs reach levels of successful operation.

Television can be a remarkable tool in many areas of activity if it is properly used. Precautions must be taken from the outset however, to insure effective usage, and to avoid the possibility of the tool becoming an end to itself. The comments and recommendations in this report are based on my experiences with WIN and WSES during the course of this project, as well as prior experience in broadcast and closed circuit television. I trust this information will prove useful for further development.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert J. Shult

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